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MEXICAN BORDER BALLADS

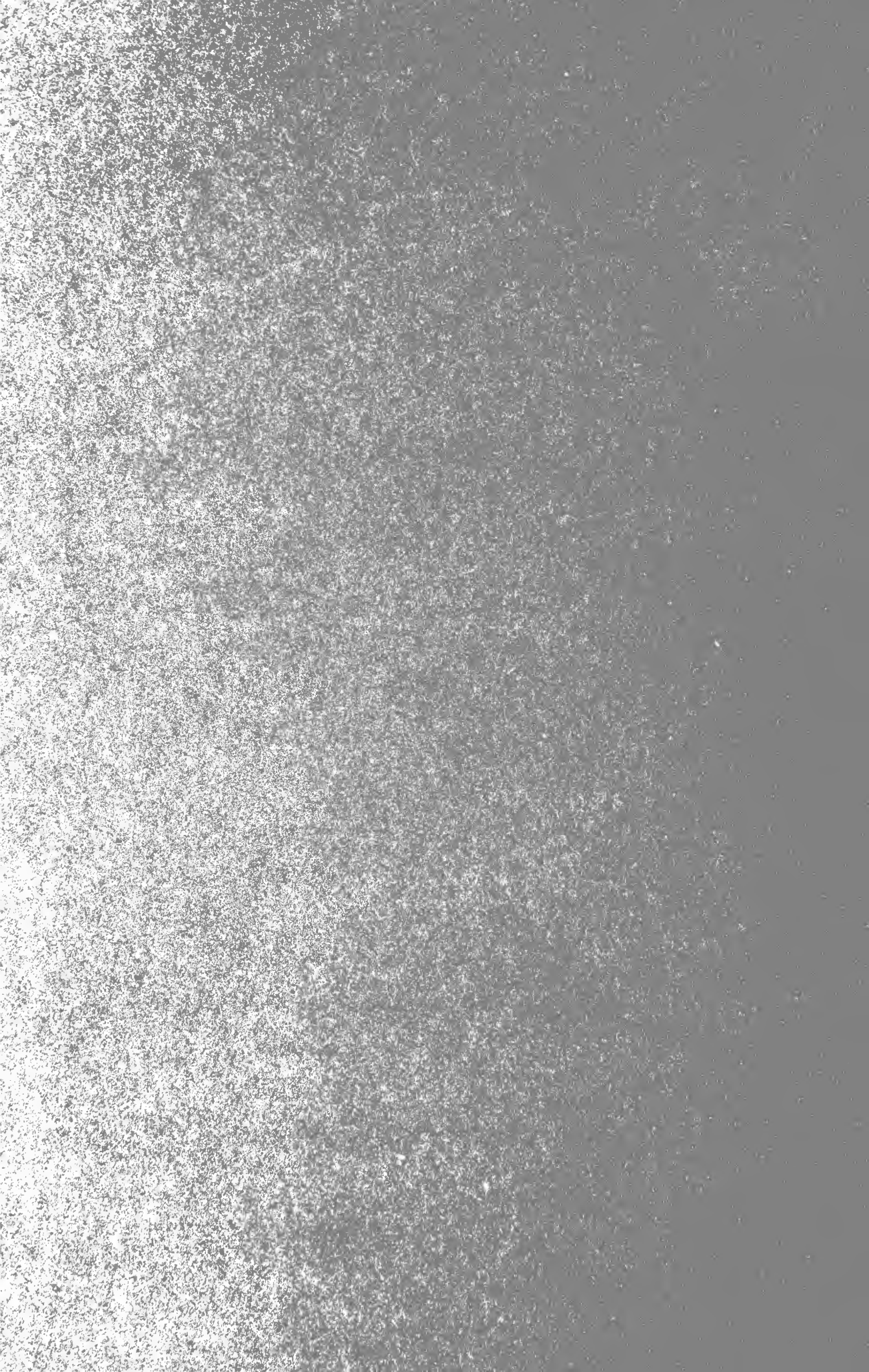
By F. B. Camp



Chinnings - 16

at Douglas

WRITTEN ON THE MEXICAN BORDER





**MEXICAN
BORDER
BALLADS**

**WRITTEN ON THE BORDER
BY F. B. CAMP**



**FIRST EDITION
PUBLISHED BY F. B. CAMP, DOUGLAS, ARIZONA
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PS 3505
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1916

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF KENNETH W. PICKETT

of Big Timber, Mont., member of Headquarters Company, Second Montana Infantry, who died on August 30, 1916, at Douglas, Ariz., from an illness contracted while doing his duty on the Mexican Border.

**"Not the rattle of the drum for him,
Not the piping of the fife,
Nor the bullets of the enemy,
That took him from this life.
Let the music of his death
Be the tramp of marching men,
For the heart of Kenneth Pickett
Was as big as any ten.
Of his fortitude and patience,
Of his grit that never died,
Oh, Montana and Big Timber!
You can think of him with pride.
Step by step, he took with others,
Here where men's souls live and die,
And his smile was always cheery
For his motto was, "I'll try."
Not for him the bugle blowing,
As it called the men to arms,
Not for him the smoke of battle,
With its brutal, crushing charms.
In this land he gave his all
Midst the crisis and disorder;
Father, mother, sweetheart, friend—
When he died here on the border.
We will miss him from among us,
For he surely was a man,
But his spirit will be with us,
Always marching in the van.
We will hear his laugh a ringing,
Feel the pressure of his hand,
For we know that he died fighting,
In the service of his land.
Not the rattle of the drum for him,
Nor the piping of the fife,
Not the bullets of the enemy,
That took him from this life.
Let the music of his death,
Be the tramp of marching men,
For the heart of Kenneth Pickett
Was as big as any ten.**

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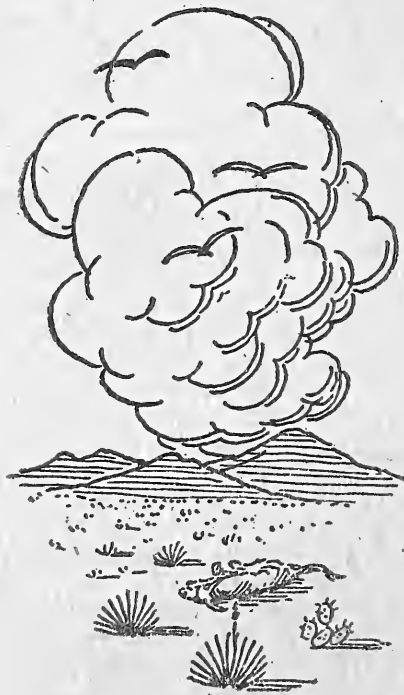
On the Way to the Border



H, it's nice to be a soldier,
In the ranks of Uncle Sam,
A bloody, bloomin' soldier,
Who doesn't care a damn.
Not a soldier in the regulars,
But in the volunteers;
One who listens to his country's call,
And leaves his home in tears.
It's nice to hear them cheering,
When the train goes through a town
That has builded in the sage brush,
'Mongst a scene of sordid brown.

When we hear the natives cheering,
See the "Chickens" waving flags,
Have the Dollies stuffing candy
In our dirty khaki bags.
It's nice to eat the rations,
That get scarcer every day,
As our train leaves old Montana,
For the border state of A,
We have canned horse for luncheon,
For breakfast and for tea;
The brute arrives so often,
It makes me want to flee.
This morning we had jelly,
Which is very seldom seen.
I discovered mine by scouting;
'Twas hiding neath a bean.
Last night as I was sleeping,
I dreamed a funny dream;
I thought that I was eating
Peaches sliced with cold ice cream.
I had a juicy beefsteak,
Cut from a yearling cow
But just as I was cutting it,
A rooky hollered chow,
I awakened from my slumber,
Which had been very brief,
To find my chunk of canned horse
Had been taken by a thief.
I won't say that I was hungry,

'Cause it sure would sound like hell,
But the names I called that rooky,
Well, I simply cannot tell.
But it's nice to be a soldier,
In the ranks of Uncle Sam,
If you aren't too particular,
And don't give a tinker's dam."



A Rookie's Letter Home



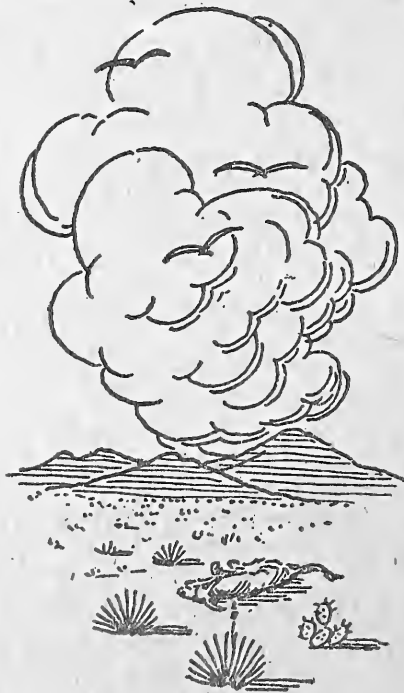
LONG the Mexican Border, August twenty-eight.
Dear Mother: I am writing, I know a trifle late,
But I have been so busy, with the Soldiers' daily
grind
That I've neglected writing, but I know you will
not mind,
When you've read what I am writing, you'll feel
a whole lot better,
And I promise that hereafter, I will write a daily
letter.

Tell Sis she wouldn't know me, since I left our little town,
For the sun has surely baked me, a most gorgeous golden brown,
Tell Dad if he could see me, he would never cuss me more,
For oversleeping mornings, or neglecting any chore.
Tell little brother Bennie, I've a pistol and a gun,
A really truly rifle, that wasn't made for fun.
Tell Hattie that I love her, when you see her, Mother dear,
That sleeping, drilling, working, I keep wishing she were here....
Tell Aunty that I thank her for the little wooden box,
The home-made jam and cookies, and the dozen knitted sox.
Tell Sis's fellow for me, if he wants to have some fun,
To join the U. S. army, and get himself a gun.
Tell Tom and Dick and Harry and strapping Jimmie Coats,
That the regiment is needing a thousand more recruits.
Just tell 'em what I'm writing, in this letter, dear, to you,
So that each and every one, will know just what we do.
At five a. m. the bugle blows, the call to rise and dress;
At five-fifteen the morning run, at six a. m. the mess.
Hot cakes and syrup, coffee, spuds, mush and bacon fried,
With sugar, milk and home baked bread to fill the space inside.
At half past six, Fatigue call sounds, the streets and tents are
p'liced,
Then we drill for two long hours, before we are released.
From nine a. m. 'till three p. m., we sleep and write and read.
Then drill again, dear mother, for it's drilling that we need.
The Post Exchange supplies our wants with almost anything,
We've a big brown tent and organ where we can go and sing.
We can get a pass to go to town, 'most any time we wish,
We've everything we want to eat, both plain and fancy dish.
We've a ball team, some boxing gloves, a wrestling match and
craps,
We've each a little army cot, we sleep on after taps.

We've mess halls with mosquito net, and shower baths quite divine.

Oh! there's nothing, Mother, which we have that isn't extra fine,
We've clothes galore for every need; Sunday, work or play,
We've a colonel who's a dandy, and a day on which they pay.
We've a hundred things, dear Mother, that I haven't room to mention,

A hundred things, dear Mother, that require our close attention.
We are happy and we're healthy, and we're learning to be men,
Such a chance to get a schooling, we may never have again.
Oh! I miss you, Mother darling, but I'm happy and content,
With the hours and weeks we're spending in the regulation tent,
'Cause I know I need the schooling I may never get again,
The school that takes the weaklings, and makes them into men.
Now, Mother dear, I've written you, a letter that is long,
'Efficiency's' the title of our regimental song,
So I'll close with love and kisses, and heart that's full of joy,
And sign my name as always, 'Your Happy Soldier Boy.'



The Daily Drill of the Rookies; or The Captain's Lament



I am the Captain of a company
O'er which I rave and gloat
But showing rookies how to drill
Has almost got my goat.

At six a. m. the drill call sounds
The line is full of dents
Some are crawling into ranks
Some sleeping in their tents.

The whistle blows, the Top roars out
Attention men in ranks
The men are grumbling in the line
The officers are cranks.

"Right Dress" the order then is yelled
Some men they can't see straight,
The line looks like the pickets
On a broken wooden gate.

Its Jones step out, and Smith get back
And Dobson lift your head
And Corporal Jimmy Dodgers
You stand like you were dead.

"Inspection Arms" the order comes
The bolts they click and rattle
They sound just like a bum stenog.
Or Villa's men in battle.

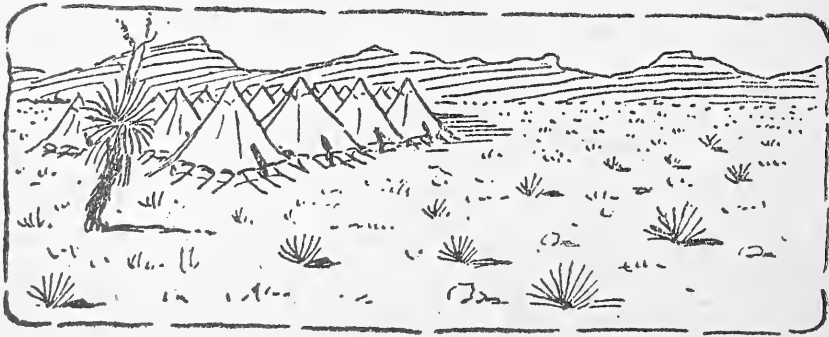
"Heads Up"—"Eyes Front"—Now stand that way
And Johnson stop your talk
"Right Face," "Forward March" I say
For Mike's sake learn to walk.

**"Column Right," the order comes
Damn it watch your step,
You're not marching at a funeral,
So fill yourselves with pep.**

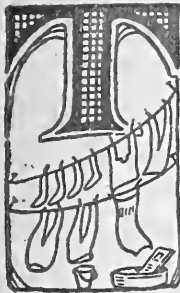
**"Squads left about" and "Right Oblique"
Ye Gods you're sure a show
You turn the corners like a wheel
You're rotten and you're slow.**

**"Company Halt" "Right Shoulder Arms,"
Please do it with a snap,
Confound you Sergeant Billy
You haven't time to gap.**

**Thus it goes day by day,
When rookies learn to drill,
If you're Captain of a company
You sure will get your fill.**



What a Rookie Thought of Border Duty



HIS is the song of a rookie, as he sits on the border
alone,
On the dark, damp nights, when the hot slag lights
roll down from the smelter zone,
When it's sultry and warm, while mosquitos
swarm and buzz with an angry tone.

I'm one of Uncle Sam's soldiers, but simply a vol-
unteer,
I came with the Second, when grim duty beckoned,
Thus I am here.

Here where you stifle, holding a rifle, under the blazing sun,
Here where you pray, day after day, for a little Mexican fun.

Out on the Mexican border, after the sun's gone down,
Thinking of fights and watching the lights, that twinkle in Doug-
las town.

Walking your post at midnight, strolling along at your ease,
All of your hair in erection, a weakness in both of your knees.

Ever alert for a Greaser, watching the shadows flit by,
Falling flat on your stomach, when the hot slag brightens the sky,
Glueing your eyes to the glasses, cursing the flaw and the fault,
Hearing far in the distance, the sentry on guard holler "Halt!"

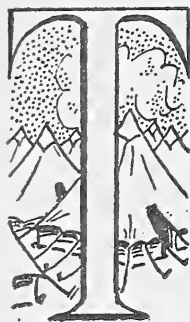
Trying to sleep in the guard tent, trying by closing your eyes,
Fighting the gnats and mosquitoes, swatting the pesky flies,
Out on the Mexican border, scarcely a mile from camp,
Out where the whirr of a rattler, makes all of your body damp.

Post No. 3 on the border, where you have a view of the town,
Scorching, blistering sunshine that bakes you a golden brown.
Canteens half full of water, water that's limpid and glugs,
Watching a column of red ants, skirmishing after bugs.

Bugs of every description, variey, color and kind,
Some with two legs on the front end, others with several behind;
Tarantulas, lizards and beetles, that fly and walk and crawl,
Bugs with a poisonous stinger that look like a carpenter's awl.

This is the song of a rookie who walked the border alone
In the bright moonlight, spilin' for a fight with Senor Villa Antone
While the senators home, 'neath the capitol dome, picked the Inter-
national Bone.

Impressions of a Few Days on the Mexican Border



URMOIL, confusion, things all upset,
Wind storms and thunder, rain that is wet,
Sand and red dobie, sun burning hot,
The whole commissary tied in a knot.

Canned milk a-boiling out in the sun,
Corned beef a cooking 'til it is done,
Bread that is baking without any fire,
The grub that is spoiling rouses our ire.

Water in pipes that is really luke warm,
Red ants by thousands constantly swarms,
Typhoid injections, ten thousand germs,
Language by non-coms, any old terms.

Smoke from the smelter tries us to choke,
Gases of arsenic born of coke,
Two kinds of cactus, plenty of thorns,
Twenty-two buglers blowing their horns.

Thirty-two sick men lying in bed,
Sweating and groaning, with pains in their head,
Rookies complaining about the chow,
Wishing for eggs and milk from a cow.

Mess kits and rifles all in disorder,
One German rookie crossing the border.
Men in the tents sing "Tipperary,"
Mexican bones all over the prairie.

Special detail for the men in the squads,
Blankets and ponchos rolled up in wads,
Cartridges issued, one bandolier,
Some of the rookies feeling quite queer.

Beautiful shower bath once every day,
Plenty of ticks, shortage of hay,
Jitney trolleys that take you to town,
Root beer in schooners, bright sparkling brown.

Mexican peons riding on mules,
Wise men and soldiers, soldiers and fools,
Everything gradually getting in order,
Here where we're camped on the Mexican border.

The Woman and the Rookie



HE rookie was tired of camp life, as he sat in the first squad tent
His hat was tilted sideways and his back and his knees were bent,
So the Captain passing, took pity and gave him a pass to go,
For a few short hours, to civilized bowers, to walk on the Alamo.


He put on his brand new leggins, his tie and his tailored blouse.
And said good-bye to the Captain, as he passed by the old guard house,
His fellow rookies in misery cursed as he started to go,
To the bright wide streets of the city, where schooners of root-beer flow.

Oh, the feeling that filled the rookie, whose face was a sunburned brown,
As he boarded the jitney trolley and started to ride to town,
Was one that he long remembered, one he could never forget,
A joyous, satisfied feeling that moistened his eyes with wet.

He called at the House of Welcome where the lights were burning bright,
Called with three other rookies, on that long remembered night,
And there he met one Woman, a girl in a thousand I guess,
She asked him a hundred questions and he answered them all with a yes.

Then she said "Let's move to the outside and sit where it's dark and cool,
And I'll tell you the dream of my lifetime, the one where I'm teaching school,
So they went from the room of brightness, to the cool dark porch outside,
And the Woman she told the rookie many things as he sat by her side.

Told him of foreign countries, the Isles of the Philippine,
Told him of rain and sunshine and other things she had seen,
Told him about her Daddy who rode into Mexico,
Wonderful things she told him, things that were really so.




The rookie sat by the woman, there on the dark cool porch,
There where the heat of their friendship had'nt a chance to scorch,
And she told him about her childhood, her life and the after years,
'Till her eyes and those of the rookie were filled with genuine
tears.

Oh, the woman she talked to the rookie in a very wonderful way,
Not as a total stranger she had known the part of a day,
But as one she had known for ages, numbered by many years,
A friend of the past and the future, thus destroying his fears.

Fears of a brutal environment, where men's hopes slowly die,
Fear of the ignorant mortal, who crawls beneath the sky,
Fear of the backward sliding on the slippery hill of Hate,
Fear of the shackles welded by the grim sure hand of Fate.


She spoke of Wilson as president, of the things he never had done,
How he let the Mexican Villa murder our men for fun,
How the orders issued from Washington were not what they ought
to be,
Oh, she opened the eyes of the rookie and made him correctly see.



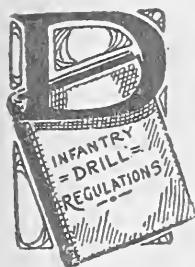
She was a wonderful woman and he was a common man,
She was a soldier's daughter, he of the Roving clan,
Her life had been spent with the army practically all of her years,
And his had been spent in the big world in the Valley of Strife and
Tears.

But the few hours spent with the Woman that night when the
rookie called,
Were the happiest spent in ages, for the army fetters galled,
They made the burden more easy and lifted him out of the hole,
That was dark, and deep and bottomless, a trap for the rookie's
soul.

They made him contented with camp life and his cot in the first
squad tent,
Took the kink from out of his shoulders and straightened his legs
that were bent,
Made his soul a beautiful image instead of a sordid clod,
And brought him back to his real self, and made him believe in
God.



Did You Ever Do the Things We Do Upon the Border?



DID you ever eat your dinner when the rain was
pouring down,
Sitting on the dobie that was wet and sticky
brown,
With your mind upon a cafe in a thriving northern
town,
While the non-coms watched you eating with a
military frown?

**No? Well we have to do this thing right here
upon the Border.**

Did you ever have a non-com with two stripes upon his arm,
Giving orders to the rookies like a silly young school-marm,
One who ought to be a working on his uncle's dairy farm,
Far away from greaser bullets that would cause him any harm?

No? Well we have to do this thing right here upon the Border.

Did you ever try to slumber on a strawless cotton tick,
On a damp and dirty dobie floor that almost made you sick,
Where the bloody, bloomin', pesky ants were crawling very thick,
And the only decoration was a regulation pick?

No? Well we have to do this thing right here upon the Border.

Did you ever have to dig a ditch to hold the surplus rain,
Make the water run up hill and then run down again,
Dig until your aching back was yelling loud with pain,
And the typhoid in your punctured arm was swelling up a vein?

No? Well we have to do this thing right here upon the Border.

Did you ever have to get a pass to take a nice clean bath,
Get a pass to leave the camp and walk the narrow path,
Or get a pass to do a thing that's always aftermath,
And brave, if you are passless, the major's awful wrath.

No? Well we have to do this thing right here upon the Border.

Did you ever live within a camp where everything's upset,
Where the wind is always windy and the rain is always wet,
Where everything is tangled in a big official net,
Where we always will remember the things we can't forget?

No? Well we have to do this thing right here upon the Border

Oh, the nevers that you've never had to do,
May sound as if they weren't really true,
But honest, what I've wrote,
Would get A captain's goat,
If he was made to do the things we have to do.

But down here on the border,
'Mongst the turmoil and disorder,
Where old Villa killed some greasers last November,
We are being schooled and drilled,
And our minds are being filled,
With the evers that we always will remember.





Target Practice

EVER lie upon your belly with some other soldier pards,
Where the distance to the targets was just two hun-
yards,
When the sun was shining brightly with a tantalizing
glare,
And the dust was floating thickly in the heavy laden air?

Ever listen to the bullet with it's whining, singing kiss,
Then have the chump who's scoring call your shot a perfect miss,
Ever try for ten straight bulleyes, what they call a perfect score,
And find when you had finished, eight twos, a three and four?

Ever lie upon your stomach in a rocky sandy hole,
With your eyes upon the target and the markers shifting pole,
With your sights a holding windage and the sling about your arm,
While your mind was wandering homeward to a little dairy farm?

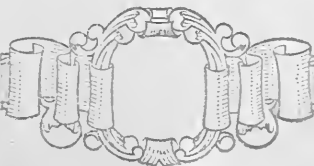
Ever bring your eyes to focus on the little spot of black,
With your elbow on a pebble and kink within your back,
With your finger on the trigger and your shoulder on the stock,
While all your thots were dreading the recoils awful shock?

Ever shoot at number seven when you should have shot at eight,
Then swear your bloomin' rifle never shot a bullet straight,
Ever shoot a string of bullets when you couldn't qualify,
And blame your awful shooting on a defect in your eye?

Ever keep right on a shooting when the bugle blew "cease Fire";
And have the Major bawl you out with wrath and awful ire,
Evere shoot your string a standing when your nerves were all
awry,
And a blurr was creeping slowly o'er your aching painful eye?

When your weak and limpid finger lacked the strength to pull the
trigger,
And you wished the little bull's eye, was bigger, bigger, bigger;
When the firing of the rifles made your ear drums fairly split,
And you knew without your shooting you could never make a hit?

Ever ricochett a bullet from a pebble off the ground,
Till it struck a perfect bullseye when it made a quick rebound,
Ever kneel with twenty others at two hundred rapid fire,
And pray like seven angels that your arms would never tire?

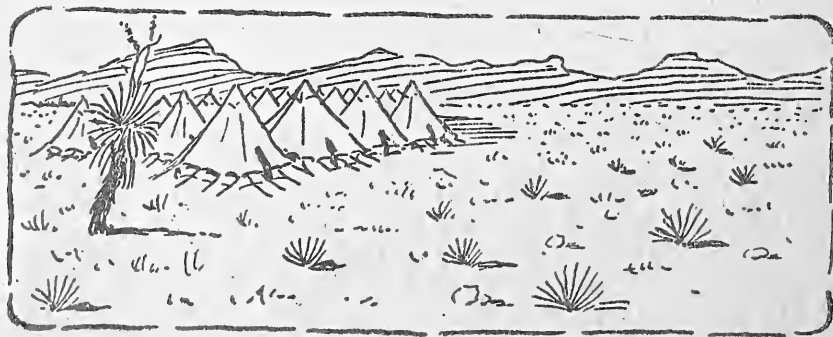


Ever hear the Major holler—"Get ready, load your guns,"
And watch the targets dancing like a bunch of shaking suns,
Ever make two bullseyes running, then miss the target clean,
'Cause your arms and legs were wabbling like a Mexicana Queen?

Ever flinch when you were shooting and bump your bloomin' nose,
While the recoil of your rifle spoiled your perfect shooting pose,
Ever shoot the range for record and fail to qualify,
'Cause the shots that you were shooting were a foot or so too high?

Ever try for Expert Rifleman, and when all your shots were shot,
Find that Marksman at one-sixty was all the prize you got,
Ever shoot like Wm. Cody from his seat upon a mount,
And find that when you'd finished that your Possible didn't count?

If you've never done these evers, why it's not so awful strange,
'Cause you've never spent a week upon the Target Range;
Never lived in pup tents and dined on Willie canned,
Never been upon the Border in the land that Villa banned.



The Wild Turnip Eaters



REMEMBER the story has been told,
And magnified a thousand fold,
Concerning some rookies exceedingly
bold,
Who ate of a root that knocked them
cold.

When out on a hike the regiment went,
Deserted the camp and vacated tent,
Six or eight hours in marching spent,
'Till they reached the hills that were
twisted and bent.

Wonderful hike the Colonel had planned,
As through his glasses the desert he scanned,
Where the bloody hot winds, scorched and fanned,
The coulees where cacti grows in the sand.


Out where the Spanish Bayonet grows,
Out where a sluggish brooklet flows,
Out on the hills where it never snows,
And the red hot wind forever blows.

"Get ready to march," the order came,
Private and Captain both the same,
Part of the big political game,
No one excused but the sick and the lame.

Food to be taken for every man,
Hauled in a wagon by mules a span,
Cooked in a monstrous kitchen pan,
And served to 'em all in a mess kit can.

Away from the camp the regiment swung,
While many a song the rookies sung,
Hard on the throat, the ear and the lung,
In civilized life they'd surely be hung.

A winding column of cotton O. D.
That from a distance was hard to see,
The Colonel a thousand men and me,
Out on the Mexican Bound-aree-



Twenty-two miles from camp we stopped,
Pup tents pitched the regiment flopped,
While the Colonel the sweat from his face just mopped,
As the big red sun the lime hills topped.

Oh, a wonderful place we choose for a camp,
Where the wind was windy and the rain was damp,
Where the smelter smoke came down like a clamp,
And smothered the flame in the kitchen lamp.

Now this is a tale of the wild turnip squad,
Not of a country forgotten by God,
Where the brown grass bakes in the doble sod,
And the soul of a man becomes a clod.

It appears where the sluggish brooklets flow,
A specie of turnip is wont to grow,
The mescal turnip if you all must know,
The eating of which makes a man loco.

Not only loco but awfully sick,
In a horrible manner and awfully quick,
It hits like a mule is wont to kick,
And you take the count while the watches tick.

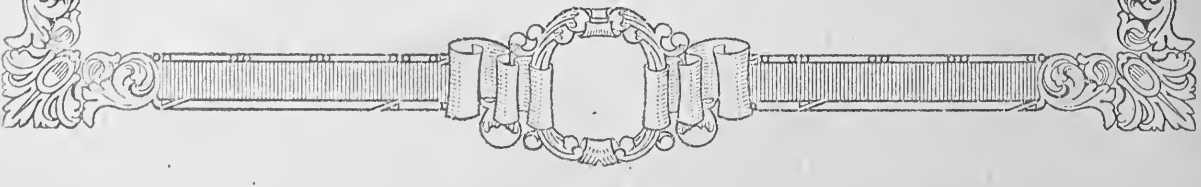
Thus it was on the camping ground,
While some curious rookies were snooping around,
This poisonous root was duly found,
And eaten in pieces from an ounce to a pound.

Just think of them eating this nauseous weed,
Bucking the unwritten law and the creed,
Where all vegetation, trees, bushes and seed,
Hold poisons that none of their systems need.

Digging a root from out of the soil,
Where poisons simmer and bubble and boil,
Where deadly rattlers sleep in a coil,
And the thorns of the mesquite is nature's foil.

Eating this root like a famished horde,
Not men who were fed on the government board,
Men who had studied and believed in the Lord,
Is it any wonder they all were floored?

Grovelling around in the dirt and sand,
Sick at the stomach, and weak in the hand,
Cussing the root, the hike and the land,
Darning the root to beat the band.



**"Wild Turnip," said one was the name of the thing,
As he passed the pieces around the ring,
And watched them eat as they started to sing,
Of the glorious future the years would bring.**

**Some in a minute, some in an hour,
Were made deathly sick by the poisonous power,
While the spirit of death, commenced to tower,
And withdraw life from the rookies dower.**

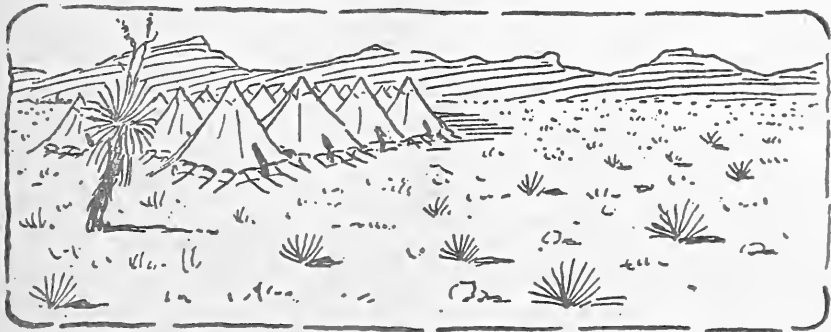
**"Assinine ignorance," said Major Riddell,
Why it certainly beats all the hinges of Hell,
How a damn fool who is healthy and well,
Could claim that he had an ounce of brain cell.**

**Now I've told you about these poor galoots,
Who fell by the road side dressed in their boots,
How most of them that they were shooting the shoots,
When the poison had gripped them that grows in the
roots.**

**How back to the camp they staggered that night,
Ejecting their suppers and pulling belts tight,
Some of them green and some of them white,
But not one amongst them ready to fight.**

**How the Major in front of the hospital ward,
Castor oil in their systems in large doses poured,
While their thots to the heights of ridicule soared,
And they swore they'd be satisfied with Govt. board.**

**Now this is a tale with a moral forsooth,
Everything written the absolute truth,
Some things that are chewed in the mouth by the tooth,
Will often destroy the fountains of youth.**



Camp Rumors

YOU could hear them on the p'rade grounds,
You could hear them in your tent,
You would hear the darndest rumors,
'Most any place you went.

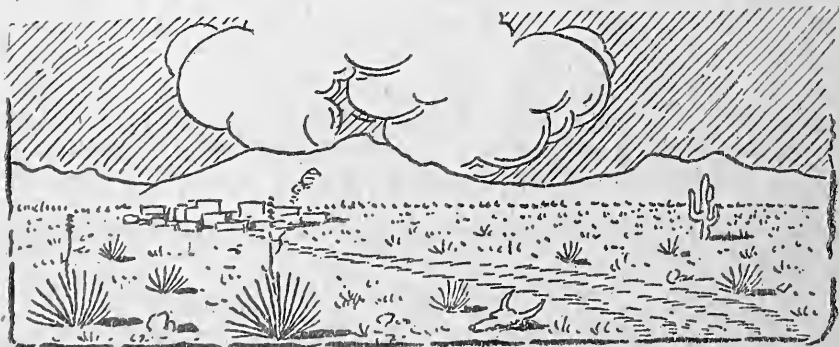
Rumors of old Villa,
Who had killed a thousand men,
Rumors of the orders,
That would take us home again.

Rumors of injections,
For every known ill,
Rumors 'bout the mess hall,
That were very hard to kill.

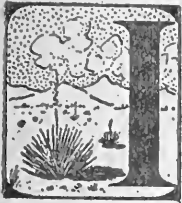
There were rumors 'bout the Colonel,
The Majors and the cooks,
The damndest bunch of rumors,
That would fill ten thousand books.

Rumors of the rookie,
Who beat it o'er the hill,
Oh, of rumors on the Border,
We surely had our fill.

Why it was even rumored,
In our camp, that I had wrote,
That the man who was our president,
Would never write another note.



The Sunny Side of Soldier Life



I have written of this soldier life, in a darn sarcastic way,

The drill and work I've raved about, and overlooked the play,

The sombre side, the dreary side, I've headlined in my verse,

Some things I've painted awfully bad and others simply worse.

With grouch and eyesight very dim, I've felt obnoxious stings,

I've written with a humor that destroys the joy in things,
Kitchen Police—Fatigue Call—discomforts of the mess,
I've hit them all a wallop and rumbled up their dress.

The non-commissioned officers have made my dander boil,
Because of orders issued that produced a dearth of toll.
The Captain and Lieutenant have been cursed and also damned,
And the regiment, from soup to nuts, I've very meanly slammed.

But, I've overlooked the joyful side, when scribbling down my muse
And have written of discomforts that would give a man the blues,
But now I'm going to cut it with this pencilonian knife,
And tell you of the sunny things in Mr. Rookie's life

There's the ball game on the p'rade grounds, just behind the Major's tent.

There's the fun you have each pay day and the money to be spent,
There's a kangarooing courthouse with a Rookie as a judge,
And the box of home-made plunder, full of cake and chocolate fudge.

There's the movie with its pictures, when to town you get a pass,
There's the smiling jolly features of your best beloved lass,
There's the wrestling match and boxing, the bloomin' game of craps,

And the cot that's made of canvas, where you mooch some pleasant naps.

**There's the singing in the squad tents, when the rookies get to-
gether,
There's the hours we spend in loafing, when its wet and rainy
weather,
There's the canteen with its candy and its sparkling cold root beer,
Its cigarettes and souvenirs and other things that cheer.**

**There's the chaplain and the service, he holds each Sunday morn,
There's the dandy Sunday dinner—chicken fricaseed—and corn,
There's the fellow with the camera who snaps you when you're
dressed,
And the pictures in your album, of the ones you love the best.**

**Now I've told you of the sunny things in every soldier's life,
I've written naught of trouble, or of regimental strife,
And every word I've written is absolutely true,
The sunny things are many 'mongst the things we have to do.**



Our Soldier Chaplains



EN of the army—listen—you, who are far from home.

Hark to what I have written, in this crudely worded poem.

Listen to what I have written, concerning a few brave men,

Who fight life's wonderful battles, with a prayer and a solemn amen.

These are our chaplain soldiers, who answered the Border call.

Who came with you men to the border leaving their homes and all,

Men, whose religious teachings, concerning the Christ and Lord, Were far removed from the army, with its rifle, bullets and sword. Catholic, Protestant, Buddhist—regardless of class or creed, Came with you men to the Border, because of your country's need. Now listen, to what I tell you, impress it all on your mind, Concerning these men, who are with us, men of a wonderful kind. Remember the night you were thinking of the girl you had left at home,

The night that the blues were creeping and your feet were itching to roam—

The night you were cussing the army, and longing for home again. The turbulent feeling of madness, the grief and the awful pain. What happened, Oh, men of the army—when the army feters galled?

Why you went from your tent in the darkness, and the army chaplain called.

He answered your call from the darkness, invited you into his tent, And talked to you like a father, till all of your passions were spent. He told you of Christ and his teachings, his wonderful gifts to men,

Till you went from his tent to your little brown cot, at peace with the world once again.

Now listen you men who are married to the words I have written here.

Do you remember the night you were thinking of the wife and the babies dear—

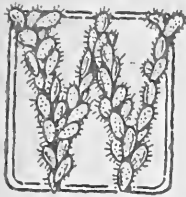
When the awful hot day and the drilling, were filling your minds with gloom,

And the thoughts of the Mexican Villa were leading your souls to doom.

How you cursed and raved at the army, when you thought of the
kiddies and wife,
And your mind was a seething maelstrom, and you dammed all the
border strife.
Remember you men, who are married—the nights I am naming
here—
When you left your tent in a temper, with a sordid thought and
a fear,
A fear that Uncle Sam's army would cross the border some night,
And the wife and the kiddies waiting, would know that you'd
died in the fight.
Remember—you men who are married, that night when your pa-
tience was spent,
Of the wonderful man, who soothed you as you sat with him in
his tent.
The man of the God above you, the man who believes in the Lord,
The man who told you of Jesus, who carried a flaming sword.
That man was our army chaplain—a very wonderful man,
Who came with you men to the border, and joined your soldier
clan.
The man, whom you all will remember, as the months and the
years go by,
The man who filled you with comfort and wiped the tear from
your eye.
Oh, men of the regular army, and men of the volunteers,
Remember, your army chaplains, in this Valley of Strife and Tears.
You've Colonels, and Majors and Captains, who drill you with iron
in the rod,
But the man who will bring you the farthest, is the Chaplain
soldier of God.

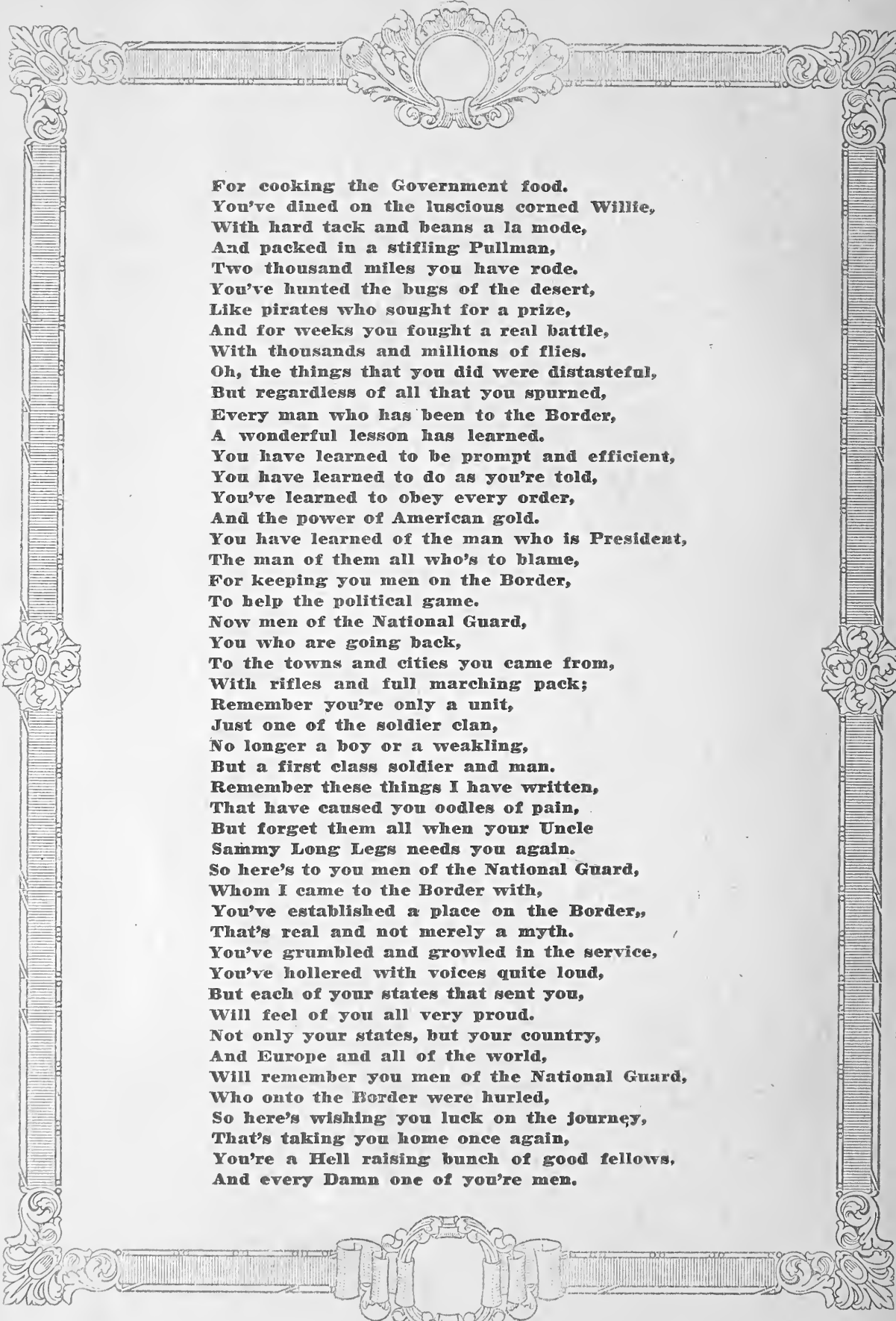


Dedicated to the Men of the National Guard



WONDERFUL men of the National guard,
You who are going back,
Back to the states you came from,
With never a chance to hack
A notch on your rifles or pistols,
Because of a Mexican shot,
Or a memory of quick forced marches,
Thru the land God made and forgot,

'List to these words I have written,
Impress them all on your mind,
So when you are back in your home states,
Your thots of the border 'll be kind.
For months you have been on the Border,
'Midst the dust and the wind and the heat,
And you've drilled on the dusty P'rade ground,
With an ache in your back and your feet.
You've messed in the bloomin' mess hall,
When the mess was as bitter as gall,
And you've messed on the red hot dobie,
When there wasn't a building at all.
You've dug mesquite and cacti and thorns,
And ditches and holes in the ground,
'Till the sound of the pick and the shovel,
Was a weird and a Hellish sound.
You've baked in the blistering sunshine,
When doing your duty as guard,
While your thots were back in your home town,
With the girl who had sent you a card.
You've cussed the Colonel and Majors,
The Captains and Lieutenants too,
And the things you have said of the president,
Were rabid and caustic and true.
You've taken the typhoid injections,
Had the vaccine scratched on your arm,
While you thot of the towns and the cities,
The woods and the ocean and farm,
You've longed for the smell of the big woods,
As you drilled in a dusty file
When the hot wind blew from the desert,
And wiped from your faces a smile.
You've policed the kitchen and stables,
Have worked with an axe on the wood,
That was used in the stove in the kitchen,



**For cooking the Government food,
You've dined on the luscious corned Willie,
With hard tack and beans a la mode,
And packed in a stifling Pullman,
Two thousand miles you have rode,
You've hunted the bugs of the desert,
Like pirates who sought for a prize,
And for weeks you fought a real battle,
With thousands and millions of flies.
Oh, the things that you did were distasteful,
But regardless of all that you spurned,
Every man who has been to the Border,
A wonderful lesson has learned.
You have learned to be prompt and efficient,
You have learned to do as you're told,
You've learned to obey every order,
And the power of American gold.
You have learned of the man who is President,
The man of them all who's to blame,
For keeping you men on the Border,
To help the political game.
Now men of the National Guard,
You who are going back,
To the towns and cities you came from,
With rifles and full marching pack;
Remember you're only a unit,
Just one of the soldier clan,
No longer a boy or a weakling,
But a first class soldier and man.
Remember these things I have written,
That have caused you oodles of pain,
But forget them all when your Uncle
Sammy Long Legs needs you again.
So here's to you men of the National Guard,
Whom I came to the Border with,
You've established a place on the Border,,
That's real and not merely a myth.
You've grumbled and growled in the service,
You've hollered with voices quite loud,
But each of your states that sent you,
Will feel of you all very proud.
Not only your states, but your country,
And Europe and all of the world,
Will remember you men of the National Guard,
Who onto the Border were hurled,
So here's wishing you luck on the journey,
That's taking you home once again,
You're a Hell raising bunch of good fellows,
And every Damn one of you're men.**

*"Bugs of every description
Varyety, color and kind,
Some with two legs on the front end,
Others with several behind;
Turantulas, lizards and beetles,
That fly and walk and crawl,
Bugs with a poisonous stinger,
That look like a carpenter's awl."*

Verses by
FJB Camp

BUGS



What thain?

Cummings

Song of the Human Toothpick - "Gods Unfinished Land"

The scorching sunsets burning hot,
The desert's drifting sand,
The stifling tent, the canvas cot,
The ghosts of Villas band.

The awful sunsets come and go,
The buzzards soar on high,
The thunder clouds a'rolling slow,
The lightning fills the sky.

Outlined against the pale moonlight
Gaunt hills of Mexico,
Then daylight chases way the night
And things move to and fro.

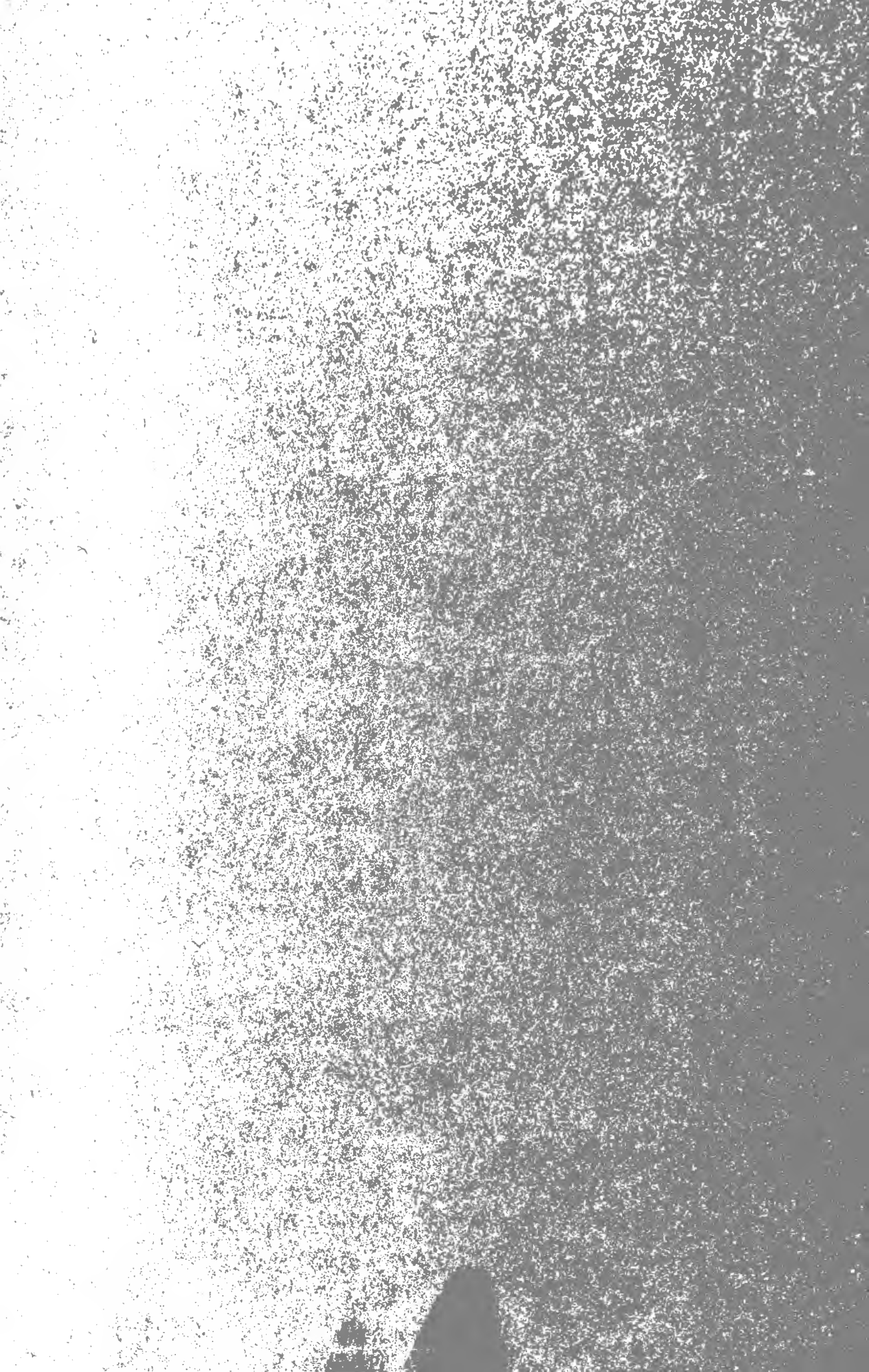
O! awful land. O! burning sand,
That fills my soul with glee (?)
I hold my pencil in my hand
And write this mel-o-dee.

I watch the soldiers as they drill,
More daily I grow gaunt,
I do some things against my will,
Do others 'cause I want

This is the song of the human toothpick,
As he sits in his tent alone,
On the dark damp nights, when the
Mexican fights, for the international bone,
And it's damnably hot, a hundred, Mein Gott!
Here in the border zone

Words by Sgt. F.B. Camp Illustrated by E. Cummings
2nd Montana Inf





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